

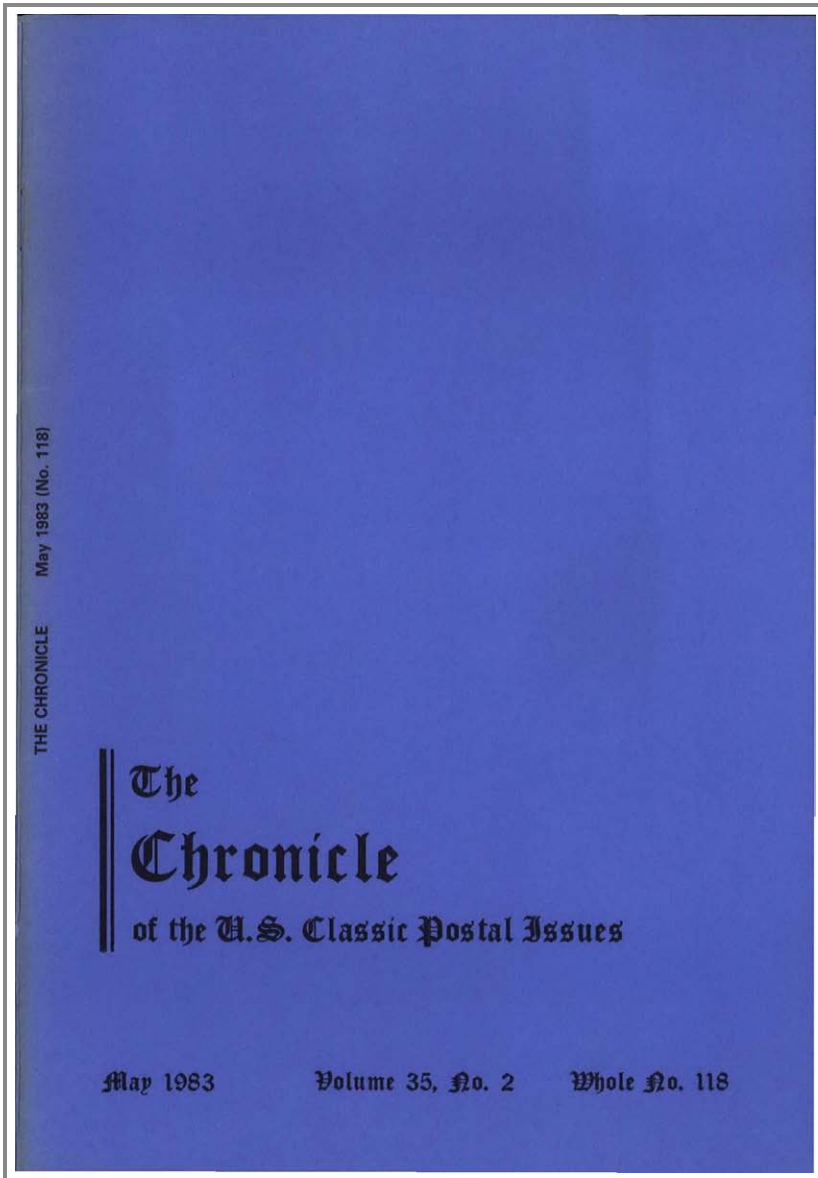


# U.S. Philatelic Classics Society

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IN MEMORIAM  
GEORGE E. HARGEST

AUGUST 26, 1906 - FEBRUARY 5, 1983



George E. Hargest died February 5 after many years of ill health. The Classics Society owes much — as does philately in general — to Prof. Hargest for his many contributions and long service. While this journal was still the *3¢ '51 Chronicle*, Hargest was a frequent contributor, and, when the *Chronicle* took its present form in 1963, he became editor-in-chief, as well as editor of the transatlantic mails section. After a heart attack in 1966, he was forced to give up the overall editorship, but retained his position as transatlantic mails editor until May 1975. He then became editor emeritus, contributing at his own pace. Hargest also served as Director from 1960 to 1969.

Prof. Hargest was associate professor of accounting at Clark University in Worcester, Mass., where he was active in the Worcester Stamp Club and Philatelic Society, and served as president of these organizations. He was closely associated with the late Mel Schuh, also of Worcester, and Lester Downing of Concord, in the study of transatlantic mails. From this interest and with access to original sources, Hargest's research developed, resulting in 1971 in the publication of *Letter Post Communication . . .*. The book won many honors, including the Crawford Medal of the Royal Philatelic Society of London, the Nugent Clougher Award of the Postal History Society of Great Britain, the Classics Society's Chase Cup, and awards from the American Philatelic Society, the American Philatelic Congress,

and the France & Colonies Group. In 1980 Hargest received the Luff Award for philatelic research from the A.P.S.

George formed a magnificent award-winning collection of transatlantic mails. Another interest was playing the trumpet. He was the first winner of the award in memory of the late Lester Downing, and was awarded the Ashbrook Cup for 1962 for his research on transatlantic mails. In 1979 he was made an honorary life member of the Classics Society, a distinction that pleased him greatly.

George Hargest is survived by his wife Lois, son Jay, and two grandchildren. In order to present varied perspectives I have asked Leonard H. Hartmann and Charles J. Starnes to give their individual assessments of Hargest's achievement.

Many of us share a sense of personal loss of a friend and colleague.

S. M. McD.

It is hard to say anything about George E. Hargest that members of the USPCS don't already know. George contributed much to the *Chronicle* and was one of the first serious students of the US-Foreign mail systems. The foundations he laid in his *History of Letter Post Communications Between the U.S. and Europe 1845-1875* is the basis for all further work.

Personally one can only say that George was a scholar and a gentleman in the truest sense. A remark was once made relating to George that bothered me considerably, we both knew it was true but still I thought it should not be printed. George's reply was most gracious and to the effect that it should stand and history will judge.

His health had not been good for some time which prompted the move from Worcester, Mass., to Florida and then selling the Florida house for a condominium as he was no longer able to take care of it. Ill health made it difficult to continue his foreign mail studies.

George's final work *The United States Foreign Mail Services* is being continued at the request of his family. It will eventually appear in print, perhaps by late 1984. It will be a revised book form edition of a number of his articles that appeared from 1963 to about 1980. George fully realized that to reprint a 1963 article on the foreign mails would be absurd. There is perhaps no branch of philately that is presently evolving new information more rapidly. George planned to revise each article himself, but now it will be necessary to seek out specialists in the various areas to update one or more articles each. Requests for help will be made at a later date.

L. H. H.

Even the great cover collections and "authoritative" articles before 1950 very often showed a deplorable ignorance of the U.S.-foreign postal conventions and their practical usage. True, Ashbrook was informed on PCM and British mails, Blake and Davis on British, Perry on Hawaii and some NGU mails, Norona on Caribbean and South American data (to name a few) — but there was no published text on the operation of *all* the mail systems set up by U.S.-foreign country postal conventions.

This big gap in collector comprehension was bridged by George E. Hargest in 1971 by the publication of his *Letter Post Communication between the United States and Europe 1845-1875*, a text which received worldwide recognition and continues to vitalize the study of U.S.-foreign mails. This book immediately established him in the very top rank of philatelists. Others will recount the various awards given in recognition of his effort, but to this collector the great value of his writings (including those in the *Chronicle* and *American Philatelist*) lies in the additional and lasting pleasure he has added to the collection and study of a previously-muddled area of U.S. philately. All honor to Hargest, who unselfishly shared his knowledge — truly a gentleman and scholar.

C. J. S.